

5. The pleasant and the profitable

Last year too I happened to be here in this town (Penukonda) in the month of February; now I am here again, four days after the year is over! This does not satisfy Me, this annual visit. My mission is to *spread Aananda* and so I am ready to come among you, not once but twice or thrice, as often as you want Me. The drill and gymnastics exhibited by the boys and girls of this School pleased the eye, by the patterns and the quick skill shown. The songs provided a pleasant background, and I must speak a word in appreciation of the Physical Education Expert, who arranged this show. He is so eager to promote the physical education of the students that he has asked again and again for a first class stadium for the school. He is eager to put this school at the head of all the schools of the State, so far as his field is concerned. Such enthusiasm is commendable. I bless his efforts.

You probably think that, since people from all parts of India even from countries outside India pass through your town in continuous flood towards Prashaanthi Nilayam at Puttaparthi, they must be pouring their contributions into the coffers of the Nilayam. Let Me declare the truth to you; I do not take anything from any one, except their love and devotion. For the last 29 years, this has been My consistent practice. The people who come there are giving Me just the wealth that you have all given Me today, the wealth of Faith, Devotion and Love, that is all.

To understand any one, you must be with them and near them; you must approach them, not with hatred or anger, but in friendship and love. So too in My case. How can you know Me, if you do not come near Me and unto me?

Students! You must win a fair name for yourself, your parents and school by your earnestness in study and enthusiasm to serve others. Your parents are bearing great hardships to keep you here in comfort; they are toiling in the fields, in the sun and rain, and sending you hard earned cash, expecting you to study well and support them. First, pay back the debt of love to them; do not behave in such a way that they repent the day when they put you to school. All other debts come later, even the debt to the motherland or mother-tongue, of which so much is heard now, all over the country.

Meet obstacles with courage

I find that the students of this School have been calm, while all round a storm is raging over this problem of language which is best left to the elders of the land. I am glad you are carrying out this programme of School Day so joyfully and nicely. When such storms brew, parents are overcome by anxiety, for they are in the dark about the movements and activities of their children. Keep them free from worry; show them the gratitude they deserve; return them the Love they pour freely into your hearts. Remember always that it is easy to do what is pleasant; but it is difficult to be engaged in what is beneficial. Not all that is pleasant is profitable. Success comes to those who give up the path strewn with roses, and brave the hammer-blows and sword-thrusts of the path fraught with danger. As a matter of fact, no road is strewn with rose petals. Life is a battlefield, a *Dharmakshethra*, where duties and desires are always in conflict. Smother the fiery fumes of desire, of hatred and anger that rise up in your hearts; it is sheer cowardice to yield to these enemies that turn you into beasts. When obstacles come, meet them with courage. They harden you, make you tough.

Steps that lead to Self-knowledge

The best way to get rid of weakness is to strike at the very taproot of the tree---the mistake that you are the body, with this name and this form, these senses, this intelligence and this mind. These are all the luggage you carry. Don't you say, my nose my mind, my hand, my reason, just as you say, my book, my umbrella? Who is this T that calls all these 'mine'? That is the real 'you'. It was there when you were born, when you were sleeping forgetful of all else, forgetful even of your body with all its equipment, internal and external. That T cannot be harmed; it does not change, it knows no death or birth. Learn the discipline that makes you aware of this Truth and you will be ever free and bold. That is real *vidya*, the *Aathmavidya*, which the sages have gathered for you. The thousands who come to Puttaparthi are coming there for this precious wealth; you too must, one day or the other, learn this and save yourselves. All men have to reach the goal, travelling along the path of wisdom.

This knowledge comes as soon as you look into yourselves and analyse your own experience. But, in order to get the craving for that analysis, you have to educate yourselves into the attitude. Developing good habits, avoiding bad ones, mixing in the company of the pious, being active in good deeds, serving those in distress---these are all steps that will lead you into the glorious path of Self-knowledge. You can, even now, take to this discipline and save yourselves from grief and distress. I bless that you may get the will to do so and to persist in the *saadhana*, till success is won.

*School Day, Zilla Parishad Higher Secondary School,
Penukonda, 20-2-1965*

*It is dedication to the Lord that sanctifies all activities.
He is the raison d'etre for all activity.
He is the prompter, the executor, the giver
of the required strength and skill,
the enjoyer of the fruit thereof
So, dedication must come naturally to you,
for, all is His and nothing is yours/
Your duty is to believe
He is the impeller of your activities,
and draw strength from that belief.
Until the wound heals and
the new skin hardens,
the bandage must protect the place.
So too, until reality is realised,*

*the balm of faith, holy company and holy thoughts
must be applied to the ego-affected mind.*

SHRI SATHYA SAI